



# Resource Family Connection

## News, Events, and Information Benefiting the Children of Waukesha County September and October, 2020



### Supporting Your Child's Mental Health as They Return to School During COVID-19

Source: UNICEF

The coronavirus outbreak has caused major disruptions to daily life and children are feeling these changes deeply. While the return to school will be not only welcome but exciting for many students, others will be feeling anxious or frightened. Here are tips to help your children navigate some of the complicated emotions they may be facing with going back to school.

#### **My child is scared to go back to school. How can I help him feel at ease?**

Starting school or starting a new school year can be stressful at the best of times, let alone during a global pandemic. You can make him feel at ease by having an open conversation about what it is that's worrying him and letting him know that it's natural to feel anxious.

Children may feel nervous or reluctant to return to school, especially if they have been learning at home for months. Be honest - for example you could go through some of the changes they may expect at school, such as needing to wear forms of protective clothing like masks. Children may also find it difficult being physically distanced from friends and teachers while at school - you could encourage them to think about other ways to bond and stay connected.

Reassure children about safety measures in place to keep students and teachers healthy and remind children that they can also help prevent germs spreading by washing their hands with soap and coughing or sneezing into their elbow.

Remind children about the positives - that they will be able to see their friends and teachers (if they are physically returning to the classroom) and continue learning new things.

#### **My child's school is recommending the wearing of protecting clothing, which is making my child feel more nervous. What should I say to her?**

Approach this conversation with empathy, saying that you know she is feeling anxious about coronavirus, but that it's healthy to talk about our worries and emotions. Children may also get upset or frustrated if they are finding it hard to wear masks especially when running or playing. You can reassure your children that lots of adults are working hard to keep your family safe, but emphasize that it's important we all follow the recommended measures to take care of more vulnerable members of our community.

#### **How can I encourage my child to follow precautions (such as frequent handwashing, physical distancing, etc.) at school without alarming her?**

One of the best ways to keep children safe from COVID-19 and other diseases is to simply encourage regular handwashing. It doesn't need to be a scary conversation. Sing along with their favorite song or do a dance together to make learning fun. Make sure to teach them about how even though germs are invisible, they could still be there. When children understand why they need to wash their hands, they're likely to continue doing so.

You can also show children how to cover a cough or sneeze with their elbow, and ask them to tell you if they start to feel like they have a fever, cough, or are having difficulty breathing.

#### **My child is not part of the same group as his close friends returning to school and is feeling even more isolated. How can he feel more connected to the classroom and his friends?**

If your child's school starts to return gradually, your child may be anxious about being separated from his friends. Continue to reassure your child that schools will open again for everyone once it's safe. When the official reopening of schools is announced, help him get ready to return to school by sharing information on when and how this will happen.

Letting your kids know ahead of time that schools may need to close again will help them to be prepared for the period of adjustment ahead. It's also important to continue to remind them that learning can happen anywhere - at school and at home - and that they can also keep in touch with and support their friends online in the meantime.

Safe and monitored use of online games, social media, and video chat programs can provide great opportunities for children to connect with, learn and play with their friends, parents and relatives while at home. You could also encourage your children to use their voices online to share their views and support those in need during this crisis.

You can encourage your children to take advantage of digital tools that get them up and moving, like online exercise videos for children and video games that require physical movement. Remember to balance online recreation with offline activities, including time outside, if possible.

#### **How can I gently check in to see how my child is coping?**

It's important to be calm and proactive in your conversations with children - check in with them to see how they are doing. Their emotions will change regularly and you need to show them that's okay.

Whether at school or at home, caregivers can engage children in creative activities, such as playing and drawing, to help them express and communicate any negative feelings they may be experiencing in a safe and supportive environment. This helps children find positive ways to express difficult feelings such as anger, fear or sadness.

As children often take their emotional cues from the key adults in their lives - including parents and teachers - it is important that adults manage their own emotions well and remain calm, listen to children's concerns, speak kindly and reassure them.

#### **Is there anything I should look out for as my child starts back at school?**

In addition to checking in on your child's physical health and learning when she goes back to school, you should also keep an eye out for signs of stress and anxiety. COVID-19 may be impacting your child's mental health, and it's important to demonstrate that it's normal and OK to feel overwhelmed at times. When in doubt, empathy and support are the way to go.

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There have also been concerns that incidents of stigmatization and bullying may increase when children return to school, due to some of the misinformation around COVID-19. You should explain that the virus has nothing to do with what someone looks like, where they are from or what language they speak. If they have been called names or bullied at school, they should be encouraged to tell a trusted adult. Remind your children that everyone deserves to be safe at school and online. Bullying is always wrong and we should do our part to spread kindness and support each other.

### My child is worried about bullying at school and online, how can I talk to them about it?

If your child is worried about bullying either in person or online, it's important to let them know that they are not alone and they can always talk to you or another trusted adult. The more you talk to your children about bullying, the more comfortable they will be telling you if they see or experience it. Check in with your children daily and ask about their time at school and their activities online, and also about their feelings. Some children may not express their emotions verbally, so you should also look out for any anxious or aggressive behavior that may indicate something is wrong.

You should also engage your children in open and honest conversations about how to stay safe online. Have an honest dialogue with your children about who they communicate with and how. Make sure they understand the value of kind and supportive interactions that mean, discriminatory or inappropriate contact is never acceptable. If your children experience any of these, encourage them to tell you or a trusted adult immediately. Be alert if you notice your child becoming withdrawn or upset, or using their device more or less than usual, it could be a sign that they are being bullied online.

It's also important to familiarize yourself with your child's school's safeguarding and bullying policies, as well as appropriate referral mechanisms and helplines available.

### New Division Staff



Welcome Kate Billington and Merry Stein to the Intake and Support Services Division! Both Kate and Merry will be assisting the division as Human Service Support Specialists.

**Kate Billington** - I joined the Team in the beginning of March, right before everyone got sent home. I had some amazing people show me how to do

what I am currently doing in a very short period of time. I'm glad I love to learn and am a quick study. Prior to working here, I have had many hats - I was a correctional officer for 11 years, clerk in the court system for 3 years, stay at home mom for 4 years, and then a postmaster for a very small post office. I have worked retail, food service, home improvement, and my passion has always been to be a counselor or to work in the social work field. At the age of 46, I graduated with my Sociology degree and came back to my home - Waukesha County. I love my new family, my new role, and I love serving the community as a member of Health and Human Services and part time with Public Health.

**Merry Stein** - My background is in Law Enforcement, and my passion has always been assisting families/children in need. What I enjoy most about my new role is that it allows me to continue assisting the community, but from another viewpoint. I am excited to be part of this Team and offer what my career experiences have given me. In my spare time, you will find me camping with my family, reading, or cooking something new.

### Free Senior Pics for Youth in Out of Home Care

Youth who are currently in a licensed foster care placement and who are scheduled to graduate from high school, can get their senior pictures taken for free. For more information, go to: <https://wifostercareandadoption.org/resources/for-youth-in-care/senior-pictures/>

## Andrew and Chrissy Sebald

Andrew and Chrissy Sebald have been foster parents for just over 2 years, since May of 2018. They got their first placement right at licensing, and he was with them for 19 months. Since then, they have had a sibling set of teenagers, and now, a newborn for the past 3 months.



Andrew is an engineer, and Chrissy works as a financial software technical manager. They have three biological kids - twins that just turned 6 and a son that is 4. Andrew and Chrissy met working as summer camp counselors in college, so they have always loved kids and wanted to make a difference in a meaningful way. The Sebalds wanted their kids to also be raised in an environment where they saw Andrew and Chrissy helping other people, and have a chance to love those who needed it most.

One of their placements told them the first week shew as with the Sebalds that she could tell how much they just loved kids - and that's how Andrew and Chrissy hope all kids feel when they come to their house. When the Sebalds' youngest son turned 2, they decided to become licensed and chose to do it through Waukesha County after seeing the meaningful relationships that the staff goes out of their way to build with bio families, foster families, and everyone involved in their cases.

In their free time, the Sebalds love anything outdoors - camping, hiking, biking, and swimming - and they also all love to read. Last winter, they had a placement of two siblings, and while providing respite for another sibling set, they took all 7 kids to the zoo and a candlelight hike - quite an adventure!

Andrew and Chrissy's favorite part of fostering is building relationships with the kids, introducing them to new adventures, and getting to know bio parents and seeing their successes along the journey.

The Waukesha County Foster Care Program and staff would like to recognize the Sebald family for their support and commitment! You are truly amazing!



### Links for Helpful Tips

5 tips to ease back to school anxiety

<https://www.hopkinsmedicine.org/health/wellness-and-prevention/5-tips-to-ease-backtoschool-anxiety>

10 tips for teaching and talking to kids about race

<https://www.embracerace.org/resources/teaching-and-talking-to-kids>

### Links to Learn the Arts

**Art for Kids Hub** - All kinds of free art lessons for kids, including how to draw for kids, and even painting and origami for kids!

<https://www.artforkidshub.com>

**Hoffman Academy for Piano** - Free online piano lessons for beginners to advanced!

<https://www.youtube.com/user/PianoLessonsForKids>

### Wisconsin's 2nd Annual (and Completely Virtual!) Families Like Mine Conference for Relative Caregivers of Children

View pre-recorded presentations from experts in the field and participate in real-time, interactive video discussion sessions regarding substance use, mental health, guardianship law, trauma informed parenting, parenting children of color - from the comfort of your own home!

Recorded presentations will be available the week of **September 14-18, 2020**. Live discussion sessions will be held via Zoom and will be pre-scheduled with additional registration required during the following week, **September 21-25, 2020**.

To Register, go to: <https://families-like-mine.eventbrite.com>

## Fall Family Fun

The information below is accurate as of the time of this publishing, but as we know - the world is constantly changing. Please contact individual locations for up-to-date activities and regulations.

### Elegant Farmer

Apple picking, hay rides, pony rides, train rides, and delicious food  
1545 Main St., Hwys ES and J, Mukwonago, WI  
When: Saturdays and Sundays Only; September 12 - October 25, 2020  
Time: 10:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.  
More Information: <https://www.elegantfarmer.com/event-calendar/>

### Emslie Farm

Hayrides, corn maze, farm animals, and more!  
2731 Northview Rd, Waukesha, WI  
When: October, 2020  
Time: Monday - Friday: 10:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m.;  
Saturday - Sunday: 9:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m.  
More Information: [http://www.emsliefarm.com/Emslie\\_Farm/Fall.html](http://www.emsliefarm.com/Emslie_Farm/Fall.html)

### Halloween in Delafield

Activities, Downtown Business Trick-or-Treat, and Great Pumpkin Illumination  
Downtown Delafield, WI  
When: Saturday, October 24, 2020  
Time: 4:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.  
More Information: <https://delafieldchamber.com/halloween-in-delafield>

### Schuett Farms

Pick your own pumpkins, corn maze, hay rides, and more  
W299S6370 Hwy 83, Mukwonago, WI  
When: Daily (contact for when specific events are occurring)  
Time: 10:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m.  
More Information: <http://www.schuettfarm.com/>

## Craft Time! Painted Acorns By: [homestoriesatoz.com](http://homestoriesatoz.com)

At some fun colors to your fall display.

#### What You'll Need:

- ✧ Acorns
- ✧ Hot Glue (Optional)
- ✧ Acrylic Paint
- ✧ Paintbrushes



#### What You'll Do:

1. Place acorns on foil-lined cookie sheet and bake at 170-degrees for a few hours (blogger baked hers for 2 hours).
2. If any caps are broken from the nut, you can use hot glue to glue them back on.
3. Paint your acorns with the acrylic paint. TIP: Brush with the grain of the nut.
4. Paint a second coat if desired.
5. Add to your fall display and admire!

## (EDIBLE!) Craft Time! Monster Jolly Rancher Lollipops By: [happygoluckyblog.com](http://happygoluckyblog.com)

Don't be scared with these deliciously simply lollipop monsters!

#### What You'll Need:

- ✧ Jolly Ranchers
- ✧ Lollipop Sticks
- ✧ Candy Eyes
- ✧ Parchment Paper (NOT wax paper!)
- ✧ Baking Sheet



#### What You'll Do:

1. Preheat your oven to 250 degrees.
2. Cover a baking sheet with parchment paper.
3. Place 2 or 3 Jolly Ranchers next to each other so they are touching. Be sure that they are spread out so they have room to melt down and you have room to add the sticks!
4. Place in oven for about 8-10 minutes.
5. Remove from oven and immediately add candy eyes and lollipop sticks. TIP: Place the sticks on the melted candy and then twist them so they are completely covered.
6. Let cool and enjoy!

## Fun Activities

Whether you are looking to go out or stay in, we have some great ideas for you! If you are going out, please be sure to contact the individual location for up-to-date activities and regulations.

### GOING OUT

#### Hartland Night Out

Village of Hartland Fire, Police, and DPW vehicles will be on display. Flight for Life helicopter is planning on landing in the park. Beer Garden open for food and drink. Village businesses will have booths for attendees to visit.  
Where: Nixon Park, Hartland, WI  
When: Tuesday, October 6, 2020  
Time: 6:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.  
More Information: <http://www.downtownhartland.com/events/national-night-out/>

#### Shalom Wildlife Zoo

Home to over 75 species and more than 750 animals. Known as America's Largest Petting Zoo! Walk the 3-mile trail or rent a golf cart  
Where: 1901 Shalom Dr, West Bend, WI  
Cost: Children 3-12 years old \$8.00; Adults \$13.50; Seniors \$11.00  
More Information: <https://www.shalomwildlife.com>

### GOING OUT AND STAYING IN

#### Teen Activities at Waukesha Public Library

There are a variety of activities planned at the Waukesha Public Library for teens! At the time of this publishing, September activities are online (registration required), while October activities are in-person at the library. Teens in grades 7-12 are able to participate.  
September 1, 6:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.: Teen Gaming Club  
September 15, 9:00 a.m. - 8:30 p.m.: Pick up a Japanese Calligraphy Craft Kit at the Reference desk. First come, first serve.  
September 15, 5:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m.: Teen Manga and Anime Club  
October 20, 5:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m.: Teen Manga and Anime Club  
More Information: <https://waukeshapubliclibrary.evanced.info/signup/Calendar>

### STAYING IN

#### Family Friendly Online Games

A wide variety of online games the whole family can enjoy.  
[https://waukeshapubliclibrary.org/children\\_fun-stuff/](https://waukeshapubliclibrary.org/children_fun-stuff/)

#### Hoopla

A digital media service offered by your local public library that allows you to borrow movies, music, audiobooks, ebooks, comics, and TV shows to enjoy on your computer, tablet, or phone - and even your TV!  
<https://www.hoopladigital.com/>

#### Virtual Escape Rooms

Escape rooms are a fun way to work together in solving clues and puzzles. They provide entertainment for the whole family. Here are 7 escape rooms you can play at home.  
<https://www.countryliving.com/entertaining/a32389258/virtual-escape-room/>

## (EDIBLE FOR BIRDS!) Craft Time! Pinecone Birdfeeders By: [onelittleproject.com](http://onelittleproject.com)

Watch the birds with this classic birdfeeder craft!

#### What You'll Need:

- ✧ Pinecones (the larger and more "open" scales, the better!)
- ✧ Peanut Butter
- ✧ Twine
- ✧ Birdseed (no sunflower seeds; songbird mixes are good sizes)



#### What You'll Do:

1. Cut 10 inches of twine. Tie it to the top of the pinecone and tie the ends together so the pinecone can hang.
2. Carefully spread peanut butter onto each of the pinecone scales. (Or, just put a whole lot of peanut butter on! More peanut butter = more birdseed!)
3. Dip and roll the pinecone in the birdseed until the peanut butter is completely covered.
4. Hang and enjoy!



# Additional Training and Events

Due to COVID-19 and social distancing, we currently are not having any in-person trainings or informational sessions. A survey will be distributed at a later time regarding in-person trainings.



## COVID-19 Resources

**How to Talk to Your Kids About Coronavirus** - This is a great article with helpful information. The website also has games and activities for your kids to play. <https://www.pbs.org/parents/thrive/how-to-talk-to-your-kids-about-coronavirus>

**Parent/Caregiver Guide to Help Families Cope with the Coronavirus** - This resource will help you understand what an infectious disease is, and how you can help your family cope. <https://www.nctsn.org/print/2251>

**COVID-19 Updates from the Department of Children and Families** - The Department of Children and Families is working closely with DHS and is committed to keeping you informed about COVID-19 and its impact here in Wisconsin. For up-to-date information, please go to: <https://dcf.wisconsin.gov/covid-19>

**Waukesha County Public Health** - Waukesha County Public Health website provides up-to-date information about the number of COVID-19 cases, the latest news and information, how to protect yourself and your family, and more. Go to: <https://www.waukeshacounty.gov/COVID19>

### (EDIBLE!) Craft Time! Fall Leaf Cookie Wreath By: [countryliving.com](http://countryliving.com)

The best kind of home decorations are the ones you can snack on later!

What You'll Need:

- ✦ Sugar Cookie Dough (Prepared according to mix, Prepackaged, Made from scratch)
- ✦ Food Dye (Green, Red, Yellow, Orange)
- ✦ Rolling Pin
- ✦ Leaf-Shaped Cookie Cutters
- ✦ Toothpicks
- ✦ Cardboard
- ✦ Royal Icing
- ✦ Hanging Wire (optional)



What You'll Do:

1. Prepare sugar cookie dough (enough for 48 three-inch cookies). Divide into four batches and tint each with one of the food dye colors.
2. Divide each tinted section into smaller sections and then mix up the colors to create a multicolored patchwork pattern. Flatten everything together using the rolling pin. Chill the dough for 15 minutes.
3. Cut out leaf-shaped cookies. If you do not have a cookie press, you can use the toothpicks to create veins in the leaves. If you want to make some leaves "sparkle," you can add some sanding sugar (different from regular table sugar).
4. Bake the cookies according to the directions with the mix or the recipe.
5. Cut two wreath forms from sturdy cardboard and glue them together. If you want to hang the wreath, tie hanging wire around it. Otherwise, you can use it as a centerpiece and simply lay it in the middle of the table.
6. "Glue" the cooled down cookies onto the wreath with dollops of colored royal icing.
7. Let dry several hours before hanging.
8. Tip: Save some cookies from the wreath so people can snack on them without ruining the wreath!



### Craft Time! Pressed Flowers and Leaves Bookmark By: [buggyandbuddy.com](http://buggyandbuddy.com)

Encourage reading with this one-of-a-kind handmade bookmark!

What You'll Need:

- ✦ Various Leaves and Flowers (pressed and dried)
- ✦ Cardstock
- ✦ Scissors
- ✦ Glue
- ✦ Contact Paper or Laminator (or wide packing tape!)
- ✦ Single Hole Punch
- ✦ Yarn, String, Hemp Cord or Raffia Ribbon



What You'll Do:

1. If your leaves and flowers are not pressed and dried yet, you can do so by placing them inside the pages of a thick book for 3-4 days. Remove them carefully!
2. Cut some cardstock the size you'd like the bookmark to be (for example, 6-inches long, 2-inches wide).
3. Make a design on the cardstock with the pressed flowers and leaves.
4. Once you are happy with the design, you will want to lightly attach them before you seal them in. You can use a dot glue runner, glue stick, or regular glue.
5. Cover the bookmarks with plastic - utilizing a laminator, contact paper, or clear packing tape on both sides.
6. Once the bookmark is covered, trim off the excess plastic.
7. Add your finishing details! Some ideas are:
  - ✦ Punch holes around the border and thread some cordage or thread. Tie the ends together at the top.
  - ✦ Punch a single hole at the top of the bookmark and tie yarn, ribbon, or string.
8. Curl up with a good book and never lose your space with your nifty bookmark!



### Contact Numbers:

#### Foster Care Social Workers:

Waukesha County  
Health & Human Services  
262-548-7212  
Michelle Lim, Foster Care  
Supervisor  
262-970-4761

Cassie BeLow ..... 262-896-8574  
Rhonda Klinger ..... 262-548-7240  
Jennifer Mantei ..... 262-548-7250  
Libby Sinclair ..... 262-548-7277  
Hilary Smith ..... 262-548-7254

#### Case Management Social Workers:

Angie Sadler, Ongoing Social Work  
Supervisor  
262-548-7272  
Eric Galvino, Ongoing Social Work  
Supervisor  
262-548-7271  
Eve Altizer, Ongoing Social Work  
Supervisor  
262-548-7267

Nicole Allende ..... 262-548-7265  
Wyatt Caldwell ..... 262-896-8281  
Kimberly Dudzik ..... 262-548-7347  
Stephanie Engle ..... 262-548-7424  
Megan Fishler ..... 262-896-8570  
Abbey Girman ..... 262-548-7695  
Sharon Godwin ..... 262-548-7684  
Laura Jahnke ..... 262-548-7359  
Alyssa Jones ..... 262-548-7239  
Jessica Larsen ..... 262-548-7346  
Maria Maurer ..... 262-548-7345  
Rachel O'Sullivan ..... 262-548-7639  
Johanna Ploeger ..... 262-896-6857  
Elizabeth Russo ..... 262-548-7349  
Kim Sampson ..... 262-548-7273  
Linda Senger ..... 262-548-7698  
Brittany Sutton ..... 262-548-7262

Children's Mental Health  
Outreach  
262-548-7666

Medical Emergency: 911

Family Emergency: 211 or  
262-547-3388

If an Allegation of Abuse or  
Neglect has been made against  
you, please call:

FASPP  
Norma Schoenberg  
920-922-9627